

The Devil Knows The Greatness Of Your God! Do You

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the greatness of God and the need for believers to have a deep understanding of His power and willingness to work through them. It highlights the importance of not underestimating God's greatness and the significance of boldly speaking His word and praying for miracles in this generation despite facing threats and opposition.

Scripture: James 2:19, Acts 4:13, Acts 4:29, Acts 4:31, 1 Corinthians 11:23, Isaiah 43:2, Hebrews 13:5

Topics: "God's Greatness", "Boldness in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

We're going to go to the communion table very, very shortly. And so if you're with us tonight, we encourage you to go to your kitchen and your cupboard and get some juice and get some crackers so that you can partake of the Lord's table with us. I want to continue on the theme tonight that Pastor Tim Delina began on Sunday morning.

As a matter of fact, I was so moved by that theme that I listened to his message again today. So I've heard it twice, and he talked about never underestimating the greatness of our God. Just a phenomenal message.

It brings everything back to center again. And from it, God has given me a message, and the title is, The Devil Knows the Greatness of Your God. Do you? You know, James, one of the apostles wrote in his epistle, in one of his verses, he said, you believe there is one God, you do well.

The devils also believe and tremble. They know the greatness of God. Every demonic power of hell, they know that they're facing a God of inestimable power.

As Pastor Tim spoke on Sunday morning, he is all-knowing, he's all-powerful, he's everywhere at the same time. He can speak to a person's heart, then go off billions of miles into the galaxy and deal with

something there all at the same time. And the devils know this.

They have, at some point, experienced the presence of God and know what it is that they're dealing with. And part of the problem that we face as the people of God is that we forget how great our God is. Somehow we come to a place of thinking that we have to plead with Him to do something for us, or maybe have to move His reluctant hand to act on our behalf, when in reality God sent His only begotten Son into this world to die for us, and the scripture tells us that if He didn't withhold His only Son, how shall He not through Him or with Him freely give us all things? So realistically, in the greatness of who God is, He came down, met us where we were in our failure and our folly, cleansed us from our sin, made us righteous again in His sight, brought us back into right fellowship with Him, and says, now ask of me what you would desire, and I'll give it to you.

Is there a mountain you need to move? Is there strength you need in your inner man? Is there a new vision you need in your heart and in your mind? Ask because I came to give these things to you. And so Father, tonight as we come to your word, would you help us one more time to see your greatness? God, if we have made you little and we've made our problems so big, forgive us, O God. If we've made your heart small, and Lord, when you have this incredible largeness of heart towards all who are called by your name, my God, would you forgive us? If we thought we had to beg you to do what you died to give us, if we thought that we had to move your hand because you were reluctant to bless us, forgive us, Lord, for our lack of understanding of how great you really are.

O God, give us a renewed heart tonight, and do something in every one of our lives. By the power of your Holy Spirit, and through your spoken word, take us from where we are to where we need to be. Move us forward in our understanding.

Give us passion and power in our prayers again, and help us to understand that in all of our struggling, and striving, and trying, and pushing to do better and to be better, all you ever asked us to do was to ask you for what we need. God, forgive us for trying to do it on our own, and help us to see your greatness one more time. In Jesus' name.

The book of Acts, chapter 4, is a story of two disciples, Peter and John, going into the temple and seeing a man who's been lame for 40 years. By the power of God, they were able to reach down to that man and see him raised up again. Again, the greatness of God had raised him up from a position that everybody knew that he had been in for a very, very long time.

Now, verse 14, we're entering the scene in Acts, chapter 4, when the order of the day, the religious order of the day, who are not, they're not for the Lord Jesus Christ. They're not for the cross. They're not for what he has done.

They're not for his definitions of truth. They're not for his way of salvation. They've crafted their own way, very much like every other society without God has done all throughout history.

It says, in seeing the man who had been healed, verse 14, standing with them, they could say nothing against it. Now, we're living in a generation, for example, where the testimony of God is too powerful, too deep, gone on for too long. This generation of the godless, they're not going to stand and deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

They know it's true. They know it's historical. They know it's a fact.

They know it can be proven. There's a great, great testimony of those who were living in weakness, who have been raised by the power of God. They know all of this.

They can't deny it. And so the strategy that we face today and others have faced throughout history is the same strategy that they faced in this time, in the book of Acts, chapter 4. It says, they couldn't say nothing against it. In other words, the testimony was too strong.

They couldn't deny its existence because it stood right before them. They can't deny the power of God. When you saw Pastor Brad Geis get up in this pulpit tonight, they can't deny the reality that God came into a room and set a man free from hopeless addiction to crack cocaine in an instant, in a moment of time.

And they can't deny the reality of the miracles of God that he has done and continues to do in his people throughout the world. In verse 15, it says, when they had commanded them to go outside of the council, they conferred among themselves. And I want you to just liken this to like a demonic assembly.

They know the power. They know. Remember I said, James wrote, the devils believe in tremble.

And when people are outside the kingdom of God, they are open to demonic suggestion. They're open to be led by the powers of darkness. Remember the scripture tells us that our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

And when they had commanded them to go out of the council, they conferred among themselves. Now, I want you to just go with me into the scene and you see darkness is animating these religious leaders, these secular leaders, and also the temple people who really want nothing to do with Christ. And they conferred among themselves saying, what shall we do to these men? For indeed that a notable miracle has been done through them as evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem and we cannot deny it.

But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them that from now on they speak to no man in this name. That has been the strategy of darkness from generation to generation to generation to generation. The strategy never changes.

We can't deny the reality of God, but we can threaten his people not to speak his name anymore. Teachers are being threatened with losing their jobs in the school system. Athletes are threatened with losing their positions even on professional teams if they happen to even mention that they might have a biblical worldview on different things.

So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. Isn't that very much like what a lot of people are facing today in the workplace? Wherever you go, wherever you travel, do not bring this man Jesus with you. Do not speak about this man Jesus.

Don't tell us what this man Jesus had to say. Don't talk about the reality as you see it of salvation exclusively offered to humankind through him. Don't speak in his name because if you do, it's going to cost you.

But Peter and John answered and said to them, whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. And you know, the thought came to me today is our choices now matter.

It really does. We can choose to cower. We can choose to come under this threat that somehow we're going to suffer if we speak the name of Jesus Christ or we can just simply choose to say, no, I can't help but speak the things that I know.

I can't help but stand up for the truth that has become a very real part of my life. And I can't bow down. I'm sorry.

I've read about Nebuchadnezzar today. I can't bow down to your golden statue when you play your music. I'm sorry.

I can't do that. And I believe that God can't deliver me whether he does or he doesn't. I'm not going to bow down to your new social order that you are using and imposing by threat.

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them because of the people, since they all glorified God for what he had done. For the man was over 40 years old in whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God. You see, this is where you and I are today.

This is the generation we're now living in. We are watching our society unravel before our very eyes. We are facing the very threats that others throughout society and in other parts of the world are actually facing today along with us.

And I suspect it's going to become more difficult in the future and not more and not easier. But when they heard this, when they heard this, when they heard about the threats, when they heard about the punishments that were possibly going to come their way, they lifted their voice to God with one accord. And they said, now here's where we're coming back to what Pastor Tim preached on on Sunday morning.

Lord, you are God who made heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. You are God. These are just men.

They are here for a moment. And as the scripture says, they're like a blade of grass that grows in the morning and is gone. It dries up and blows away at night.

They're just here just for a moment and then they're gone into eternity. They have no eternal power, but you are God. You made everything that exists, everything in heaven, everything in the earth, everything in the sea and everything that is in them.

Now you have to know when we pray, who are we talking to? Who by the mouth of your servant David said, why did the nations rage and the people plot vain things? In other words, why do people consistently rise up and think that they can overthrow you and overthrow your people? Have they not yet learned anything from history? You can't overthrow the people of God any more than you can overthrow God because God's spirit is alive inside of his church. And the more you oppress the church, the more she's going to grow. History proves that.

China proves that. Vietnam proved that. You look all over the world and you see wherever the kings of the earth rose up against the testimony of Christ in his people, the church has prospered.

And even when she said to go underground, she's prospered. The numbers have increased and the glory of God has begun to fill the land. Why do the nations rage and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.

In other words, everything that is godless, everything that is motivated and animated by demonic power will rise up and move, especially in this last day against both God, the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit, and God's church, you and I. They will rise up against the church and they will rise up with all the power, all the threatenings, all the coercion that they've got. For truly, he says in verse 27, against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, that's the secular rulers, with the Gentiles, that's the godless, and the people of Israel, that's the compromised religionists, were gathered together. In other words, the whole works of them have gathered together against the Lord, against his Christ, and against his people.

But verse 28, listen to what they said, to do whatever your hand and your purpose determined before it to be done. In other words, they are all under your control. They are all in the boundaries of what you allow and don't allow.

And there's no one that can raise their hand against you and prosper. Even what they think they're doing has already been prejudged by you. You have determined how far they can go and what they can or they can't do.

In other words, the people are saying, God, you are great. There's nobody greater than our God. This is who we are calling out to.

This is who we are praying to. We are on the winning side. As Paul the Apostle said, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Trials, difficulties, tribulations, powers, principalities, mountains, valleys, whatever we have to go through, threatenings, darkness, loneliness, whatever the situation, nothing can separate you and I from the love of God. Everything is predetermined by him.

He knows the boundaries of behavior. He knows what can prosper and he knows what can't. Now they said, after all of this, all of this, this declaration of who God is, they said, now, Lord, look on their threats.

Now, Lord, this is my prayer now. Consider the threatenings of this godless, godless generation against the testimony of Christ. Consider the threatenings against your people in the workplace, in the school system, in the homes, in our communities, everywhere we travel and all that we do.

Consider their speech saying, you're going to pay a price if you dare speak this man's name and go against our new ideas of what society should look like and what truth is and what truth is not. Now, Lord, they said, look on their threats and grant to your servants that with all boldness, they may speak your word. In other words, God, give us confidence to speak your word.

Give us confidence to walk with you and to know that you are with us. Grant to us this incredible courage to speak your word. By stretching out your hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy servant, Jesus.

Look on their threats, give your servants boldness to speak your word by stretching out your hand, your hand, not our hands, your hand through us. The inference is clear. We recognize it's by your power that we live.

It's by your greatness that we're able to go forward through this darkness. It's by your victory that we're able to declare the victory that you've given to us and are willing to give to others. Stretch your hand out and let signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant, Jesus.

This has got to be our prayer again in this generation. I'm telling you, it's mine. I'm asking God to do miracles again.

I'm asking Christ to stretch out his hand and do the things that he said he came to do. I'm asking him to give sight to the blind, heal the brokenhearted, set the captive free, let the poor have the treasure of heaven open to his heart, give freedom to the oppressed. I'm asking him to raise up those that are bowed down.

I'm asking him to heal sickened bodies. I'm asking him to give straight thinking to minds that have become cloudy and dark. I'm asking him to break chains of addiction and affliction off people's lives.

I'm asking God through his son, Jesus Christ, one more time in one more generation to stretch out his hand one more time and begin to heal in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Leonard Ravenhill, a great prophet of God, once said to me, he said, Carter, a man with an experience is not at the mercy of a man with an argument anymore. And I believe that with all my heart.

How do you say they saw the man healed? They knew he had been 40 years laying down at the temple gate begging and they could not deny it. Don't you think it's time for you and I to come back to an understanding of how great our God is? Don't you think it's time to start agreeing with what he calls us to do and with boldness starting to pray that the scripture does say these signs will follow them that believe they'll lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. It's time for you and I to believe it's time for us to begin to pray for our neighbors.

It's time to slip out of this a little cocoon of timidity if the devil has succeeded in wrapping us up in it and say, no, no, no, no. I have to speak about the things that I know and I have to declare the truth that I know to be the truth because the realm that I live in is eternal and it's God's realm. I will live and rule and reign with Christ forever and I'm not going to cower under the threats of this godless generation.

I was reading this morning in my Bible about the three Hebrew boys that refused to bow down to a golden statue. It would have been so easy and you think about Daniel who just refused to stop praying for 30 days. It would have been so easy just to compromise and not pray or not speak or not stand or just maybe just kneel with the crowd for a little while, but no, they said, no, we only bow before God and we are going to stand and we're going to declare him to be the only God and he's the only one that we will worship.

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness. And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken. I don't know if that was a physical shaking, a spiritual shaking.

I suspect that there was an actual feeling of being shaken in that room. I really do. And suddenly again, the Holy Spirit comes and fills them.

See this is not Acts 2, this is Acts chapter 4. They recognized, God, we need you. You are a great God. You made heaven.

You made the earth. You made the sea. You made all that in them is.

We are being threatened. We are being told we're going to suffer for speaking your name. And Lord, we're not going to do this on our own strength for we know we can't do it in our own strength, but we're calling out to you in your greatness, O God, and asking you to stretch out your hand through us as we speak your word under the influence of your Holy Spirit and begin to heal, begin to do what only you can do.

And God heard that prayer. This is the thing that amazes me. He heard it.

He shook the place. He filled them again with his Holy Spirit and they started speaking the word of God with boldness. That means with authority.

They weren't cowering. They weren't drawing back. They were speaking it with authority and as they did, God began to heal people.

And the scripture goes on to say, with great power, the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them all. Every one, there was nobody, nobody, nobody left out. The greatness of our God, the largeness of God's heart, the incredible mercy of God's hand, his willingness as God to work through us as his ambassadors and testimony on the earth, not in our strength, but in our weakness, not when we have it all together, but when we recognize that without him, we can't go forward and we don't have the power to go forward.

But when we pray, when we believe, you see, you have to have a vision of the greatness of God or you can't pray like this. You'll always be begging and whining and pleading and seemingly trying to move his hand to do some little thing in your life when he wants to do so much more. He's much bigger sometimes than we've allowed our minds and hearts to think.

And I'm thankful for Pastor Tim's message on Sunday morning because it brings everything back into focus again. And it just opens, if we have a little world, it just opens it up suddenly and we begin to realize who it is that actually now lives in the third person of the Trinity inside these physical bodies. Who it is that is willing to manifest the greatness of his power and love and healing and wisdom through us.

Yes, through you and me, in our insignificance, in our struggles, in our trials, in our misunderstandings and in all that we do and fail to do. Yet this great God, this great God is willing to be God in us, to us and through us to a fallen world all around us. He's willing to give us his heart for people.

When we can't love, he still can. When we can't go forward, he still can take us forward. When we can't think of what to say, he can still give us the words to speak because he's God.

All things were made by him. Without him was not anything made that is made. And by him all things consist.

And John, the beloved apostle said, and we beheld him. We beheld his full of grace and truth. We beheld God face to face.

Oh, the humility, the power, the grace and the goodness of our God. And so father, as we come to the communion table tonight, we are asking you Lord to give us a vision again of your greatness. Give us a

vision again as your people of what you're willing to do as we pray.

Give us a vision Lord of you one more time shaking the place where we are, lifting us out of where we need to be taken out of and bringing us in to that place where we need to be. Give us great grace. Give us great strength.

Give us faith and give us the victory Lord that will bring honor to your name. Father, give us the grace to speak to our neighbors. Give us the grace to pray for the sick.

Give us the grace to believe for miracles we need in our own lives. Father, we thank you. We praise you and we bless you in Jesus name.

Amen. We're going to come to the communion table now. And as we do, let's keep in mind that we don't have to beg God to give us what he died to give us.

I'm making it as simple as I can tonight because it's becoming simpler to my heart all the time. The Lord says, I died to give it to you, Carter. Why would you beg me for it? I've shown you the depth of my love.

I've shown you the depth of my power. I've made you an ambassador and a witness of the fact that I still raise people from death into life. I've given you giftings and abilities that are not your own.

I've invited you to walk together in unison with me. So it is not out of order to say, Lord, one more time. Give us boldness to speak your word.

Stretch your hand out through us and begin to heal people that are sick and confused and dying in this world. And I'm speaking to you tonight, come into this prayer meeting week after week with your own struggles. And there's nothing wrong with that.

But you can't stay there. Remember that when God visited his people in Egypt, he not only took them out of where they were, but he wanted to take them into something he had for them. The problem they face is that they were willing to come out, but they were not willing to go in, that first generation.

Let it never be said of us that we were willing just to be forgiven our sin and where we spent our whole time trying to get out of something, get out of this, get out of that, get out of this, but never willing to be taken into where God wants to take us. Where we begin to walk in unison with him, where his power starts flowing through our lives for the sake of others. And yes, yes, we will suffer resistance.

There's no doubt about that. This generation will just not lie down and let us walk over them. They're going to fight with everything they've got, but we have a lot more than they do.

We have the living God who created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is. Praise be to God. Nothing can stand against him.

And so by virtue of association, nothing can stand against you either. That's the promise of the word of God. For I received to the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Isn't it wonderful that we get to do communion together around the world, 208 countries, and we get to lift the bread and the juice and just say, God, thank you that you are willing to redeem us and give us your strength in life until you come to take us home. In the same manner, he also took the cup after supper saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Hallelujah. Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.

I have no doubt about that whatsoever. I can feel it. I can feel it in my spirit.

I can feel it in my bones. I can feel it in the air. I can feel it when I get up.

I can feel it when I go to bed at night. Soon and very soon, we're going to see the King. Though now, first season, first season, the apostle Peter says, first season, there might be some hard times.

First season, things might be a little bit difficult. But God said, when you go through the water, I'll be with you and you won't drown. When you go through the fire, it's not going to burn you.

I'm going to be with you. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

And not only will we not be forsaken, we will be a testimony of the keeping power of God and the wonderfulness of our God to everyone around us. So let's rise up as the church of the living Christ. Take our rightful place in this world.

And by God's grace, by God's grace, let this be your prayer. Even if you need healing yourself tonight, Lord, through me, stretch forth your hand and begin to heal in Jesus' name. God bless you.

We love you. Look forward to seeing you Sunday morning from New York City in the sanctuary. Pastor Tim Delaney will be there and back here again following Tuesday for Worldwide Prayer.

Stay strong.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/GdikRbB3M1U.mp4>

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